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Message Text

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15
ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 USIA-06 OPIC-03 COME-00 EB-07

PRS-01 /038 W
---------- 001717
R 211236Z SEP 76
FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6875
AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L LAGOS 10816

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, EGEN, NI
SUBJECT: FORBES MAGAZINE

REF: STATE 231861

1. WE ARE PLEASED THAT FORBES' FLANAGAN HAS HIS NIGERIAN VISA. AMBASSADOR MENTIONED HIS VISA PROBLEM TO MEA FOLLOWING TELCON WITH AF/W LOLLIS BUT WE DO NOT KNOW WHETHER EMBASSY'S INTERCES-SION FACILITATED THE MATTER.

2. AMBASSADOR SPENT TWO HOURS WITH FLANAGAN IN LONDON A MONTH AGO, BRIEFING HIM ON NIGERIAN ECONOMIC SITUITION AND US BUSINESS/ INVESTMENT/TRADE PERSPECTIVES. FLANAGAN IMPRESSED AMBASSADOR AS QUICK-MINDED, OBJECTIVE AND MATURE INDIVIDUAL WHO SHOULD WIRTE A STRAIGHTFORWARD AND PERCEPTIVE PIECE. WE ANTICIPATE IT WILL INDEED CONTAIN UNFLATTERING AND CRITICAL ELEMENTS, BUT WE WOULD EXPECT ITS OVERALL TONE TO BE UPBEAT AND HELPFUL. SUGGEST AF/W READ FLANAGAN'S RECENT FORBES MAGAZINE COVER STORY ON SOUTH AFRICA.

3. TRAVEL BAN, PROUTY'S PASSPORT, AND FLANAGAN VISA ARE LIKE APPLES, ORANGES AND A VEGETABLE. DIFFICULT TO DISCERN A TREND IN THIS SALAD. YES, FMG AT TOP LEVELS MAY BE SLIGHTLY MORE RELAXED ABOUT FOREIGNERS THAN IN THE SIX MONTHS FOLLOWING FEBRUARY COUP ATTEMPT, BUT THIS IS NOT THE REASON WE GOT PROUTY'S PASSPORT BACK. MEA RETRIEVED IT BECAUSE WE MADE THEIR LIFE SO UNPLEASANT WITH OUR CONSTANT ENTREATIES AND DEMARCHES. THE TRAVEL BAN IS
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OFF BUT PERMISSION TO TRAVEL IS WRAPPED IN A WEB OF BUREAUCRATIC

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REQUIREMENTS THAT INDICATES SMC STILL SUSPICIOUS OR GUTLESS AND
WANTS MAINTAIN TIGHT CONTROLS. (MOD HAS JUST EVISCERATED PLANNED
PROGRAM FOR ROYAL COLLEGE OF DEFENSE STUDIES WHICH ARRIVED
SEPTEMBER 18 FOR PREVIOUSLY APPROVED WEEK'S TOUR OF NIGERIA.)
WE WOULD LIKE TO BELIEVE THAT FLANAGAN
WAS GIVEN A VISA BECAUSE AMBASSADOR SANU WAS WISE
ENOUGH TO BELIEVE HE WOULD WRITE A STORY THAT WOULD HELP NIGERIA
MORE THAN IT WOULD HURT, AND COURAGEOUS ENOUGH TO ACT ACCORDINGLY.
AS FOR NIGERIANS "TRYING IN SMALL WAYS TO IMPROVE RELATIONS,"
"MEA MAY BE TRYING. BUT MEA DOESN'T CUT MUCH OF A SWATH THESE DAYS
WITH THE SMC.
EASUM

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